have been laid down in the Factories Act, 1948 and the Rules framed thereunder. All industrial establishments are required to follow the same.

Closure of Mines in Orissa and Bihar

242. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of Mines are facing closure in Orissa and Bihar;

(b) if so, the reasons which let to the closure of these mines; and

(c) the details of the steps taken by Government to extend time to the mine owners to fulfil the environmental norms so that the mining activities are continued?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) The Supreme Court of India in the Writ Petition (Civil) No.202 of 1995 [with Writ Petition (Civil) No. 171/96] passed an interim order on 12.12.96 that in accordance with Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, all on-going activity within any forest in any State throughout the country, without the prior approval of the Central Government, must cease forthwith. As per the order, every State Government must promptly ensure total cessation of all such activities forthwith. In compliance of the above order, Government of Orissa and Govt. of Bihar have closed down certain mines opeating in forest areas. Legal opinion in the matter had been obtained. The matter is sub-judice before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The State Governments or the aggrieved parties have to approach Hon'ble Supreme Court wherever necessary.

Handing over of Sukhinda Chrome Mines to NMDC and CMC

243. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to hand over 855 hectares of Sukhinda Chrome Mines to NMDC and CMC; and

(b) if not, the present position of the ownership of these prospected and developed chorme mines?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Mineral Concessions are granted by respective State Governments as per provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and Rules made thereunder. At present the area of 855 hects. in Sukhinda Chrome Mines is under the possession of State Government of Orissa. Any further decision in the instant case has to be taken by the State Government of Orissa in accordance with the judgement dated 4.4.1995 to Hon'ble High Court of Orissa in O.J.C. Nos. 7729/93, 4701/94, 3825/94, 5422/94 and 7054/94 and Hon'ble Supreme Court judgement dated 23.7.1996 in S.L.P. Nos. 10838/95, 11391/95, 11392/95 etc.

All India Mines and Geology Conference

244. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL
SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Industry Minister of Gujarat has addressed the need for geological and rational development of wealth in the country to bring prosperity to backward rural area through employment generation in All India

Mines and Geology Conference held in December, 1996 at New Delhi;

(b) whether general demand of the State was to arise the royalty on minerals specially the lignite;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken notice of the deliberation at the conference to review the present policy for fixing the royalty rates on minerals; and

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Government constituted a Study Group on 30.1.95 for carrying out detailed review of rates of royalty and dead rent applicable to major minerals (other than Coal, lignite and sand for stowing). The Study Group submitted its report in November, 1995. The report of the Study Group has been examined and the revision of rates is under consideration of the Government. As regards Lignite, action for review of royalty on Lignite has been initiated by the Ministry of Coal.

मध्य प्रदेश के देवभोग क्षेत्र में हीरों के भंडार के संबंध में आंकलन

245. **श्री राघव जी:** क्या खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार ने मध्य प्रदेश के देवभोग क्षेत्र में हीरों के भंडार के संबंध में कोई आंकलन कराया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो वहां हीरों का कितना भंडार होने का अनुमान है;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं और इस आंकलन के कब तक कराये जाने की योजना है;

(घ) क्या हीरों के अतिरिक्त वहां अन्य मूल्यवान धातुओं के भी पाये जाने की संभावना है; यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ङ) क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार के अतिरिक्त किसी अन्य अभिकरण ने भी इस संबंध में आंकलन किया है; यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

इस्पात मंत्री तथा खान मंत्री (श्री बीरेन्द्र प्रसाद बैश्य): (क) से (ग) जी, हां। भारतीय भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षण ने देवभोग क्षेत्र में सर्वेक्षण किया था तथा हीरे की स्रोत पहाड़ियों में पांच किम्बरलाइट पाइपों का पता लगाया है। वन (संरक्षण) अधिनियम (1980) के तहत स्वीकृति उपलब्ध न होने के कारण सर्वेक्षण पूरा नहीं हो सका।

(घ) और (ङ) मध्य प्रदेश के भूविज्ञान तथा खनन निदेशालय (डीजीएमएमपी) ने सेन्द्रमुरा गांव में एलैक्जेंड्राइट और लातापारा तथा जामगांव गांवों में गारनेट का पता लगाया है। मध्य प्रदेश के भूविज्ञान एवं खनन निदेशालय ने सोलह (16) टन गारनेट का अनुमान लगाया है। मध्य प्रदेश राज्य खनन निगम ने ऐवजैम्ड्राइट के कुछ टुकड़े एकत्र किये हैं।

Delegation of Power to State Governments to renew Licences and mining Leases

246. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to delegate power to State Governments to renew licences and mining leases in their respective States;

(b) if so, the details of the concessions proposed to be granted to the State Governments; and

(c) the steps taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) The Central Government, Ministry of Mines in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-Section (1) of Sec. 26 of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation & Development) Act, 1957 [vide Notification No. 69(E) dated 30th Jan., 1997], have directed that the powers exercisable by it under Sub-Sec. 2 of Sec. 7 and Sub-Section (2) of Section 8 of the Act, in respect of minerals specified in Part-C of the First Schedule to the Act, in an area in a state shall also be